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Governor Deval Patrick

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DEVAL PATRICK
GOVERNOR

Media Contact

Heather Johnson
Bonnie McGilpin
Juli Hanscom
617-725-4025

Alex Zaroulis (ANF)
617-727-2040 X 35488

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Governor Patrick Celebrates Opening of Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts' New Center for Science and Innovation

New Center Vital to Berkshire County Economic Development;
Underscores the Patrick Administration's Record Investment in
Education

NORTH ADAMS – Friday, October 4, 2013 - Building on the Patrick Administration's commitment to creating an excellent education system for all students, Governor Deval Patrick today joined state and local officials to celebrate the opening of Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA)'s Center for Science and Innovation. This new Center represents an extraordinary investment by the Patrick Administration in public higher education, and is a vital economic development investment in Berkshire County.

"We invest in education because we believe that it is the single most important

investment government can make in our collective future," said Governor Patrick. "The new MCLA Center for Science and Innovation will create a direct pipeline to train our students for the jobs of the 21st century global economy, and serves as an example of our commitment to making the investments today that will create a stronger Commonwealth for the next generation."

"This project demonstrates the Patrick Administration's commitment to investing in the Commonwealth's public colleges and universities," said Secretary of Administration and Finance Glen Shor. "Our prudent fiscal management has earned the Commonwealth its highest bond ratings in history – this means we are able to make critical infrastructure investments like this one at a lower cost to taxpayers, create new jobs and help secure the Commonwealth's economic future."

"We know that this type of investment will reap great reward for our students and for the Commonwealth," said Secretary of Education Matthew Malone. "The jobs of the future haven't been thought of yet, but we are able to prepare our workforce by creating great places for them to learn and tinker."

Funding for the Center was made possible through \$54.5 million in capital funds, dedicated to the project from the Governor's 2008 Higher Education Bond Bill and \$1.7 million in additional funds from MCLA. It is the first new publicly funded building on the campus in 40 years. The demand for educated workers in the fields of biotechnology, nanotechnology, engineering and health care have reached an all-time high. The Center will serve as a resource for students, faculty, K-12 educators and employers in the region, and will connect MCLA more closely to the research and innovation pipeline in biotechnology, nanotechnology, engineering, health care and other fields.

"Thanks to the shared vision and efforts of countless friends and supporters on campus, in the community, in the legislative delegation and in other state offices and agencies, who all offered their tireless advocacy and support, the Center for Science and Innovation will engage our students, enable our faculty to do their best work and serve as a sense of pride to our community," said MCLA President Mary Grant.

"Through MCLA President Mary Grant's vision and the overwhelming support of the Governor and his Administration, the opening of the Center for Science and Innovation today has provided not only a state-of-the-art learning environment for MCLA students but also a facility that will become a regional STEM resource center for the community and our K-12 educators and students," said Mayor of North Adams Richard Alcombright. "This Center over time, will become a catalyst for economic activity, development and job creation in the city and greater region for many years to come."

"Today we celebrate another milestone in the Patrick Administration's commitment to building world-class public higher education facilities," said Commissioner of the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance Carole Cornelison. "For Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts it means a new state-of-the-art science and technology center that will help advance student learning and workforce development in the Commonwealth."

"I am delighted that the Patrick Administration has made this substantial and much-needed investment, now realized in this extraordinary, state-of-the-art building," said Commissioner of Higher Education Richard Freeland. "MCLA has the space and facilities as the campus proceeds with its reinstated chemistry major and expanded physics program, and as its students pursue their studies of science and innovation."

This new facility also is an important addition to the Commonwealth, as we continue to press forward with our goal of producing greater numbers of graduates who specialize in the high-demand STEM fields."

The Center will serve as a central location for all of MCLA's science and related programs and will promote research-intensive science learning and hands-on discovery. The Center covers over 65,000 square feet for nine flexible laboratories and provides research space for biology, environmental science, chemistry, physics, psychology and the Berkshire Environmental Resource Center.

The Patrick Administration has made significant capital investments in the Commonwealth's higher education infrastructure. In fiscal year 2008, the Governor increased funding for higher education capital projects through his first five-year capital plan, and shortly afterwards obtained passage of the \$2.2 billion, 10-year higher education bond bill that designated, among others, \$54.5 million of capital funds towards MCLA's Center for Science and Innovation. Today, higher education investments represent more than 10 percent of the Commonwealth's entire bond cap, up from three percent in fiscal year 2007.

"This facility is another fine example of the cooperative efforts of government working together with our educational institutions bringing new opportunities to students, giving them the competitive advantage today's employers need," said Representative Gailanne M. Cariddi.

"As the Senate Chair for the Joint Committee on Higher Education, I have seen firsthand the world class education being provided at MCLA," said Senator Michael O. Moore. "The Center for Science and Innovation represents a significant investment in public higher education and the regional economy in Berkshire County."

"MCLA's new state of the art center will provide the tools students need to succeed in our 21st century economy," said Representative Tom Sannicandro. "Investing in STEM related higher education projects are one of the most effective ways to prepare our students for the high tech jobs that are in demand now."

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